



# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF CORONER  
1104 N. MISSION RD., LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90033



**Anthony T. Hernandez**  
Director

**Lakshmanan Sathyavagiswaran, MD**  
Chief Medical Examiner-Coroner

March 1, 2011

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 2 –  
ADMINISTRATION OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY CODE  
RELATING TO THE FEE CHARGED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF  
CORONER FOR REMOVING AND KEEPING OF DECEDENTS  
(ALL DISTRICTS)(3 VOTES)**

**SUBJECT**

The Department of Coroner requests approval of the proposed ordinance amending Los Angeles County Code Title 2 which allows a fee to be collected for the actual expense incurred by the coroner when removing a body from the place of death and keeping the body until its release, from the person entitled to control the disposition of remains of a deceased person.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Introduce, waive reading and schedule a public hearing for March 22, 2011 regarding the attached ordinance amending Section 2.22.100 of Title 2 – Administration of the Los Angeles County Code.
2. Upon adoption of the ordinance, delegate authority to the Director, Department of Coroner, or his designee to increase the fee collected from the persons entitled to control the disposition of remains of

**Accreditations:**

*National Association of Medical Examiners  
California Medical Association-Continuing Medical Education  
Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education*

*American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/LAB  
Peace Officer Standards and Training Certified*



decedents as specified in Section 7100 of the Health and Safety Code. The fee shall be an amount not to exceed four hundred dollars (\$400).

**PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

The Department of Coroner conducted a fee analysis which reflected an increased cost for transportation and handling of decedent remains. The increased fee is a cost recovery effort and will ensure the department is reimbursed for all costs incurred.

This ordinance amendment will be the first update to the existing allowable fee charged by the department since its inception on August 2, 1991.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:**

Approval of the recommended action is consistent with the County's Strategic Plan, Goal 1. Operational Effectiveness: Maximize the effectiveness of processes, structure, and operations to support timely delivery of customer-oriented and efficient public services.

**FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:**

Your Board's approval of the attached ordinance amendment will authorize the Director to increase the transportation and handling fee of decedent remains from \$200 up to a maximum of \$400. The increased fee is a cost recovery effort and will reimburse the department for all associated costs of the program. Upon your Board's approval, the cost recovery fee based on Auditor-Controller FY 2010-11 approved billing rates shall change from \$200 to \$312.12.

There is no impact on net County cost.

**FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS:**

Pursuant to Section 27472 of the Government Code, whenever custody of a dead body is taken by the Department of Coroner pursuant to law, the Director may charge and collect from the person entitled to control the disposition of the remains, as specified in Section 7100 of the Health and Safety Code, the actual expense incurred by the Coroner in removing the body from the place of death and keeping the body until its release to the person responsible for its interment. The Charge shall not be imposed upon a person who claims and proves to be indigent, and shall not include expenses of keeping the body during the time necessary for the Chief Medical Examiner-Coroner to perform his duties in connection with it. The Charge shall not be imposed in cases in which the body is that of a child no more than fourteen (14) years of age, or in cases in which the Coroner



ascribes the death to the criminal act of another unless the Coroner has reasonable grounds to believe that the deceased was involved in any criminal activity which contributed to his or her own death. The charge, if not paid, may be considered part of the funeral expenses and paid as a preferred charge against the estate of the decedent.

The Director shall determine when the charge authorized hereby will be imposed and the amount thereof. No charge shall be imposed if private charitable funds available to pay funeral costs would thereby be reduced so as to preclude payment of the costs from such funds.

The ordinance amending Title 2 (Administrative Code) of the Los Angeles County Code has been approved as to form by County Counsel. The Auditor Controller has approved the attached increased fee schedule.

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 54985, your Board must schedule a public hearing after the first reading of the title of the adopting ordinance. Notices of the hearing shall be published pursuant to Government Code Section 6066. Per California Health and Safety Code, Section 13869.7, a copy of the proposed ordinance amending Title 2 (Administrative Code) must be on file with the Executive Office of the Board at least 15 days preceding the public hearing.

**IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES OR PROJECTS:**

Your Boards approval of the proposed fee increase will allow the department to be reimbursed for all costs incurred and ensure that the costs for providing services are recovered from the individuals that derive a benefit from the program.

**ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION:**

Adoption of this ordinance which amends Title 2 (Administrative Code) of the Los Angeles County Code is exempt under the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061 (b).

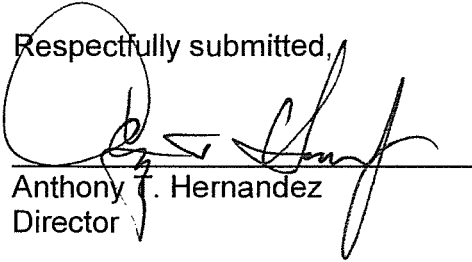


**CONCLUSION:**

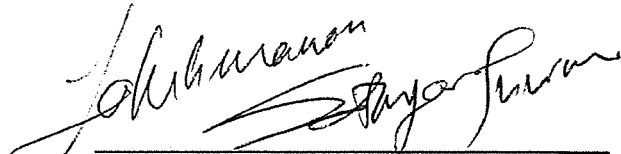
Following Board approval, the Executive Officer-Clerk of the Board is requested to return two copies of the adopted Board letter to:

Department of Coroner  
Attention: Elizabeth Seung, Contracts Manager

Respectfully submitted,



Anthony T. Hernandez  
Director



Lakshmanan Sathyavagiswaran, M.D.  
Chief Medical Examiner Coroner

Attachment

c: Auditor-Controller  
Chief Executive Office  
County Counsel  
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors





**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION  
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 525  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-3873  
PHONE: (213) 974-8301 FAX: (213) 626-5427

WENDY L. WATANABE  
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

MARIA M. OMS  
CHIEF DEPUTY

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
ACCOUNTING DIVISION  
500 W. TEMPLE ST., ROOM 603  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-2713

January 31, 2011

TO: Sarah Ahonima  
Administrative Deputy I  
Department of Coroner

FROM: <sup>CY</sup> Connie Yee, Division Chief  
Accounting Division

SUBJECT: **FISCAL YEAR 2010-11 BILLING RATES**

As requested, we reviewed your calculations of the Fiscal Year 2010-11 billing rates for the Department of Coroner. Based on our review, the rates shown on the attachment are approved.

If you have any questions, please call Rick Vandenberg at (213) 893-0972.

CY:RV

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Attachment



**Department of Coroner**  
**Billing Rates**  
**Fiscal Year 2010-11**

<b><u>Service</u></b>	<b><u>Rate</u></b>
Postmortem Exams (1):	
Class A	\$ 7,348 per exam
Class B	3,674 per exam
Class C	1,837 per exam
Class D	919 per exam
All Others	459 per exam
Private Exhumation	1,653 per case
Psychological Autopsy	4,616 per case
Additional Requested Microscopic Slides:	
From Hold Jar (First Slide)	128 per slide
Hold Jar (each additional request)	36 per slide
Special Stains	115 per slide
From Paraffin Block	18 per slide
IHC Stain	162 per slide
Slide Processing	41 per slide
Forensic Lab Tests	
Opiates/Amphetamines/Phencyclidine/Marijuana/Cocaine	
Screening/Barbiturates	62 per case
Each additional test	
Confirmation:	
Methamphetamine	137 per test
Marijuana	136 per test
Neutral	137 per test
Bases	132 per test
Benzodiazepines	166 per test
Tissue Storage and Handling:	
Tissue Storage Handling Charge	45 per case
Tissue Split Sample Handling Charge	70 per case
Microanalysis (2):	
Labor Only	144 per hour
EDX and/or SEM, with Operator	502 per analysis



**Department of Coroner**  
**Billing Rates**  
**Fiscal Year 2010-11**

<b><u>Service</u></b>	<b><u>Rate</u></b>
Photograph	\$ 2 each
Photograph Processing Senior Clerk	17 per case
Photograph CD	22 each
Photograph CD Processing Senior Clerk	17 per case
Protocol Reports (3)	82 per report
Shortened Form Protocol	27 per report
Transportation of Deceased (4):	
Transportation	183 per case
Personnel Handling Charge	17 per case
Professional Witness (5):	
Division:	
Forensic Laboratories	169.083%
Forensic Medicine	128.440%
Investigations	127.549%
Clerical Support	\$ 53 per case
Request for Statistical Data (other than Biennial Report)	80 per hour
Request for Review of Documents (per request):	
Active Case	28
Archive Case	67
Microfiche Case	37
Microfilm Case	42
Request for Documents, Other than Protocol Reports (per request):	
Active Case	27
Archive Case	72
Microfiche Case	37
Microfilm Case	40



**Department of Coroner  
Billing Rates  
Fiscal Year 2010-11**

<b><u>Service</u></b>	<b><u>Rate</u></b>
Request for Inquest Transcript (per request):	
Archive Transcript	\$ 81
Microfilm Transcript	42
Request for Proof of Death Letter	13 per case
X-Ray Rate (Processing)	25 per case
X-Ray	1 each
Veteran Burials (admin.)	546 per case
Veteran Burials (transpt.)	213 per case
Mortuary Death Certificate	22 per case
Amendment Death Certificate	23 per case
Request for Form #15	21 per case
Protective Apparel	11 per request
Organ Procurement Consultation & Approval	79 per case
Organ Procurement (hospital)	1,237 per case
Fingerprint	641 per case
Port-of-Entry Letters	27 per request

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- (1) Includes the cost of toxicological tests for only alcohol and barbiturates, microscopic slides except for additional requests, and Pathologist cost at \$220.44 per hour.
  - (2) These rates may be used to charge outside entities for occasional use only. If an entity frequently requests the service, County Counsel has advised that a contract for services should be negotiated. In addition, this rate may be used to charge County departments.
  - (3) Rate is to be charged for any request. For reports already processed, additional requests should also be billed at this rate.
  - (4) Rates are to be applied pursuant to Section 27472 of the Government Code and County Ordinance No. 90-0163. Total cost does not exceed maximum allowed.
  - (5) To calculate the rate to charge, use the productive hourly salary rate of the individual called to testify plus the appropriate division rate. In addition, add the clerical support figure on a per case basis.



DEPARTMENT OF CORONER  
VARIOUS BILLING RATES  
FISCAL YEAR 2010-11  
TRANSPORTATION COST

FN: 10-11Coroner  
RN:TRANSRATE

DEPARTMENT OF CORONER  
FISCAL YEAR 2010-11

PERSONNEL CALCULATION - COST PER CALL

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	NO. OF	% OF	ANNUAL	ADJ FOR % OF
	POSITIONS	TIME	SALARY	TIME SPENT
		SPENT		ON CALL
FORENSIC ATTENDANT	17	100.00%	\$42,876	\$728,892
SENIOR FORENSIC ATTENDANT	1	50.00%	\$46,808	\$23,404
				<hr/>
				\$752,296
ADJ.FOR 5TH SVF				708,970
STUDENT PROFESSIONAL WORKERS				<hr/>
				<hr/>
TOTAL AVG COST PER TRIP				\$708,970
				<hr/>
TOTAL S & W COST				\$708,970
ADDITIONS:				
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS				306,351
DEPT. OVERHEAD				309,064
DIVISION OVERHEAD				288,869
				<hr/>
TOTAL FORENSIC SERVICES COST				\$1,613,254
FORENSIC SERVICES DIRECT S & S				\$80,098
				<hr/>
				\$1,693,353
				<hr/>
				\$1,693,353
				<hr/>
TOTAL S&EB & S & S COST FOR TRIPS				\$1,693,353
UNIT COST/5990				\$282.70
MILEAGE COST:				
MILEAGE RATE PER MILE				0.24
AVERAGE ROUND TRIP MILEAGE				50
MILEAGE COST (VEHICLE RATExMILEAGE)				<hr/>
				12.12
				<hr/>
TOTAL COST PER CASE				\$294.81
				<hr/>
5TH SVF	94.241%			
EB %	43.211%			
Dept OH	43.593%			
Div OH (Inv,P&Supp & FSC Serv)	40.745%			
GCO	0.000%			
PWH	1771			

Per Deborah Peterson, Supvg.Inv.II, the services and S&S allocated.  
Total cost does not exceed maximum allowed by Govt. Code Section 27472  
and Ordinance No. 90-0163



DEPARTMENT OF CORONER  
VARIOUS BILLING RATES  
FISCAL YEAR 2010-11  
HANDLING OF DECEDENTS COSTS

*FN: 10-11Coroner*  
*RN:HANDCST*

DEPARTMENT OF CORONER  
FISCAL YEAR 2010-11  
HANDLING OF DECEDENTS COSTS

FORENSIC ATTENDANT	<u>\$42,876</u>
ADJUSTMENT FOR 5TH STEP	\$40,407
ADDITIONS:	
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	17,460
DEPT OVERHEAD	17,615
INV,P&SUPP & FSC.SERV.DVN OH	<u>16,464</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$91,945</u>
	<u>\$91,945</u>
HOURLY RATE (GCO/PWH)	\$51.92
HANDLING	<u>33.33%</u>
APPLICABLE COSTS (HOURLY RATExHAND %)	<u>\$17.31</u>
5TH SVF	94.241%
EB %	43.211%
Dept OH	43.593%
Div OH (Inv,P&Supp & FSC Serv)	40.745%
PWH	1771

Per Ruben Pena, Supvg.Coroner Inv.FSC.Services, it takes approximately 20 minutes.  
20/60 = .33.33 (pg 47)